

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. An apparatus comprising:
 - 2 a housing having a number of walls, a top and a bottom;
 - 3 a charger located in said housing for charging a removable battery pack of the type
 - 4 which is used to power rechargeable hand tools and other tools;
 - 5 a receptacle operably connected to said charger and being capable of receiving a
 - 6 removable battery pack to be charged by said charger;
 - 7 an audio unit for producing an audio signal located in said housing;
 - 8 a cord and plug for connecting said apparatus to a source of AC power
 - 9 a first circuit for connecting said cord to said charger and said audio unit, whereby
 - 10 AC power is applied to said audio unit to power the same and AC power is also applied
 - 11 to said charger;
 - 12 a relay connected in circuit between a battery pack located in said receptacle and
 - 13 said audio unit;
 - 14 a relay coil connected in circuit between said cord and said audio unit, said coil
 - 15 monitoring the presence of AC power being applied to said audio unit and causing said
 - 16 relay to open circuit and isolate said audio unit from said battery when AC power is
 - 17 applied to said audio unit and close circuit when AC power is not applied to said audio
 - 18 unit, thereby enabling said battery pack to power said audio unit when AC power is not
 - 19 applied thereto.

1 2. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 further including at least one AC power
2 receptacle connected in said first circuit so that AC power can be provided to said
3 receptacle when said cord and plug is connected to a source of AC power.

1 3. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 further including an AC to DC converter
2 connected in said first circuit and at least one DC power receptacle connected to said
3 converter.

1 4. An apparatus as defined in claim 2 further including a ground fault circuit
2 interrupter connected in said first circuit between said at least one AC power receptacle
3 and said cord .

1 5. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said audio unit comprises a
2 radio.

1 6. An apparatus as defined in claim 5 wherein said audio unit further
2 comprises a CD player.

1 7. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said housing has a generally
2 cuboid shape.

1 8. An apparatus as defined in claim 7 wherein said housing has a generally
2 cube shape.

1 9. An apparatus as defined in claim 7 further comprising a frame structure that
2 is in the shape of an open faced cuboid, with each leg being connected to two other legs
3 at right angles, said frame structure being larger than said housing and being attached

4 thereto at multiple connection points, said frame structure providing protection for said
5 housing.

1 10. An apparatus as defined in claim 9 wherein said frame structure comprises
2 a plurality of elongated generally cylindrical frame members that are connected to one
3 another by connector fittings at the eight corners.

1 11. An apparatus as defined in claim 10 wherein said housing has a top,
2 bottom, front wall, rear wall and two side walls, and recesses located at the interface of
3 the top and the two side walls and the bottom and the two side walls, an elongated
4 cylindrical housing member located in each recess and attached to said housing at
5 opposite ends, a plurality of linking connectors being attached to each housing member
6 and an adjacent frame member, to thereby connect said frame structure to said housing.

1 12. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said audio unit has operating
2 controls and displays located in a front wall of said housing

1 13. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 further comprising an access door
2 located in a rear wall for accessing a chamber that includes a receptacle for receiving a
3 battery pack for charging by said charger.

1 14. An apparatus as defined in claim 2 wherein said at least one AC power
2 receptacle is located in a first side wall.

1 15. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said cord and plug extend from
2 a second side wall, said apparatus further including a cord wrap structure on said second
3 side wall.

1 16. An apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said top has a recess therein
2 with a bridging portion extending across said recess and forming a handle for carrying
3 said apparatus.

1 17. An audio power unit for providing an audio output and for charging
2 removable battery packs, said unit comprising:

3 a housing having a generally cuboid shape with front, rear, left and right and side
4 walls, a top and a bottom;

5 a charger including a receptacle located in said housing for charging the
6 removable battery pack;

7 an audio unit for producing an audio output located in said housing;

8 a cord and plug for connecting said apparatus to a source of AC power

9 a circuit for connecting said cord to said charger and said audio unit, whereby AC
10 power is applied to said audio unit to power the same and AC power is also applied to
11 said charger, said circuit isolating said audio unit from said battery pack when AC power
12 is applied to said audio unit and connecting said battery pack to power said audio unit
13 when AC power is not applied to said audio unit.

1 18. An audio power unit as defined in claim 17 wherein said circuit further
2 comprises:

3 a relay connected in circuit between a battery pack located in said receptacle and
4 said audio unit; and

5 a relay coil connected between said cord and said audio unit, said coil monitoring
6 the presence of AC power being applied to said audio unit and causing said relay to open
7 circuit and isolate said audio unit from said battery pack when AC power is applied to
8 said audio unit and close circuit when AC power is not applied to said audio unit, thereby
9 enabling said battery pack to power said audio unit when AC power is not applied
10 thereto.

1 19. An audio power unit as defined in claim 17 further comprising a frame
2 structure that is in the shape of an open faced cuboid, with each leg being connected to
3 two other legs at right angles, said frame structure being larger than said housing and
4 being attached thereto at multiple connection points, said frame structure providing
5 protection for said housing.

1 20. An audio power unit as defined in claim 19 wherein said frame structure
2 comprises a plurality of elongated generally cylindrical frame members that are
3 connected to one another by connector fittings at the eight corners.

1 21. An apparatus as defined in claim 20 wherein said housing has recesses
2 located at the interface of the top and said two side walls and the bottom and said two
3 side walls, an elongated cylindrical housing member located in each recess and attached
4 to said housing at opposite ends, a plurality of linking connectors being attached to each
5 housing member and an adjacent frame member, to thereby connect said frame structure
6 to said housing.